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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8050
INFO RUEHCR/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG 983
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 3149
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 7540

DEPARTMENT FOR H, AF/S-SEGARS, AND HA-ABRAMS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: SHUM, PTER, PINS, ZI
SUBJECT: BROTHER OF ONE OF THE THORNHILL SIX PLANS FURTHER CONTACT
WITH SENATOR EAGLETON

State Dept. review completed

REF: A) HARARE 7052, B) HARARE 7445

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. EMBOFF RECEIVED A CALL DEC. 14 FROM MR. JOHN BRISCOE, U.S. CITIZEN BROTHER OF PETER BRISCOE, ONE OF THE SIX AIR FORCE OF ZIMBABWE (AFZ) OFFICERS DETAINED AND ALLEGEDLY TORTURED IN THE WAKE OF THE THORNHILL SABOTAGE. BRISCOE, WHO WAS CALLING FROM JOHANNESBURG, SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIS MOTHER IN JO'BURG AND HIS SISTER-IN-LAW IN HARARE REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE CASE AGAINST THE SIX.

3. BRISCOE SAID HE WAS PLANNING TO RETURN TO THE U.S. SHORTLY (HE IS A PROFESSOR AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA) AND WOULD BE HAVING LUNCH WITH SENATOR EAGLETON TO DISCUSS THE THORNHILL SIX CASE. HE ASKED EMBOFF WHETHER THERE WAS ANYTHING HE SHOULD TELL THE SENATOR AT THAT TIME. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN IN CONTACT THROUGH OFFICIAL CHANNELS WITH SENATOR EAGLETON AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, AND IF THERE WAS ANY FURTHER INTEREST, THE DEPT. WOULD BE HAPPY TO KEEP THE SENATOR INFORMED.

4. EMBOFF INQUIRED WHETHER MR. BRISCOE HAD SEEN THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN SENATORS HATFIELD, LAXALT AND EAGLETON AND PRIME MINISTER MUGABE, WHICH HAD BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS (REF B). BRISCOE SAID HE HAD. HE THEN OFFERED THE OPINION THAT IT WAS HIS "VERY DISTINCT IMPRESSION" THE PREFERRED COURSE OF ACTION FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN A SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THIS CASE WAS TO "DRAW BACK AND LET THINGS TAKE THEIR COURSE." EMBOFF EMPHATICALLY CONCURRED.

5. ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY NEWS ON THE POSSIBLE TIMING OF THE TRIAL OF THE THORNHILL SIX, EMBOFF REPLIED THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE COURTS WERE IN

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RECESS UNTIL AFTER THE HOLIDAY SEASON. TO EMBOFF'S
KNOWLEDGE, NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE TRIAL. BRISCOE
AGREED THAT WAS ALSO HIS UNDERSTANDING.

6. EMBOFF CLOSED THE CONVERSATION BY ENCOURAGING
BRISCOE TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH
DEPARTMENT'S ZIMBABWE DESK OFFICER. BRISCOE ACKNOWLEDGED
THAT HE HAD SPOKEN ONCE WITH DESKOFF, WITHOUT REALIZING
WHO HE WAS. HE PROMISED TO GET IN TOUCH UPON HIS
RETURN TO THE U.S.

KEELEY

END OF MESSAGE

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